

# **MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 13, 2004**

Albert Godfrey, Sr. called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:09 p.m. at the Fallen Heroes conference room, Central Maine Commerce Center, 500 Civic Center Drive, Augusta. Members present were Jay Bradshaw, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, John Dean, Albert Godfrey, Sr., Edward Johnston, Geoffrey Maker, Harty Norris, Chief Jethro Pease, Charles Soltan, Steve Willis and Susan Pinette (staff). Members excused were Michael Albert, Jack Berry and Chief Darrel Fournier. Members absent included Representative Patricia Blanchette, Senator Bruce Bryant, Representative Thomas Bull, John Cannon, Art Cleaves, Representative Robert Duplessie, Senator Richard Nass, David Wacker and Bill Williams. Due to a lack of a quorum, no official business was conducted at the meeting.

Al Godfrey read a copy of his letter to Governor Baldacci resigning his position on the Fire Commission effective following the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. (*The letter will be attached to the minutes*) The Fire Commission will have two vacancies – representatives of the Governor and the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters.

## **Reports of Committees**

Fire Commission members discussed the 2005 Blaine House Conference on Emergency First Response (Spring Conference). The Spring Conference will be on Friday, March 11, 2005 at the Augusta Civic Center. Members agreed on a November or December announcement of the conference. Members suggested the following areas be included on the conference agenda: recruitment and retention, emergency medical services, law enforcement, emergency management and fire services. Members discussed offering core and new topics for the conference break out sessions. Fixed fire suppression systems and clandestine labs were mentioned as possible workshop topics. Several names for the keynote speaker were suggested and the consensus was to ask Senator Susan Collins. Members also noted that a new committee member would need to be appointed to replace Al Godfrey.

The Training Facilities Committee's final report was redistributed with the changes members suggested at the June meeting. All references to a central geographical location for the state training facility have been eliminated. Fire Commission members approved the changes and the report will be distributed. The final report will be available on the Fire Commission's website and be included in the Fire Commission's annual report. Members also discussed the

RFI (request for information) and Steve Willis and John Dean agreed to prepare the RFI.

Fire Commission members were reminded that nominations for candidates of the “Best Practices Award” should be submitted to the Best Practices committee before the end of 2004. Nomination papers are available on the Fire Commission’s web site or from members of the Best Practices committee.

## **Old Business**

Fire Commission members discussed the Bangor ordinance on truss construction warning signs and whether to introduce similar state legislation in 2005. Members discussed Bangor’s successful implementation of their ordinance, the need to get industry’s cooperation and the possibility of rulemaking rather than legislation. Members agreed to continue discussions at the October meeting.

The November referendum on the tax cap (Question 1) was the next item of business and, absent a quorum, members agreed the Fire Commission could not vote to formally support or oppose Question 1. Members did have a lively discussion on the pros and cons of the referendum and how Maine communities and services would be affected.

## **New Business**

Fire Commission members discussed submitting legislation in 2005. Members noted a letter from Larry Willis, Fire Chief of Hermon, citing his concern regarding drivers passing people who are directing traffic at the scene of an emergency. Chief Willis suggested legislation similar to the present school bus law. Members agreed to study the issue at the next meeting.

Members learned of the possibility of using Maine Fire Training and Education (MFT&E) surplus funds to finance the two Fire Commission studies: healthcare and recruitment and retention. The RFI for the Training Facilities study needs to be completed and therefore is not included in this plan. The consensus of the Fire Commission members was “*to agree to pursue looking at MFT&E surplus funds and rechannel these funds into the Fire Commission’s two studies- healthcare and recruitment and retention.*” Members agreed to look at additional alternatives, including grants, before proposing legislation. Members were reminded that two groups were appointed in May 2004 to start discussing language for legislation.

Fire Commission members were informed of the Fire Officer Symposium being held in Belfast on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. Registration is open until September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Members agreed to the following meeting schedule for the remainder of 2004:

Monday, October 4 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 pm	Central Maine Commerce Center
Monday, November 8 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 pm	Central Maine Commerce Center
Monday, December 6 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 pm	Central Maine Commerce Center

The meeting of the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission adjourned informally at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette